

METHODS FOR INDUCING ANTIGEN-SPECIFIC T CELL TOLERANCE

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Abstract

Methods for inducing antigen-specific T cell tolerance are disclosed. The methods involve contacting a T cell with: 1) a cell which presents antigen to the T cell, wherein a
10 ligand on the cell interacts with a receptor on the surface of the T cell which mediates contact-dependent helper effector function; and 2) an antagonist of the receptor on the surface of the T cell which inhibits interaction of the ligand on the antigen presenting cell with the receptor on the T cell. In a preferred embodiment, the cell which presents antigen to the T cell is a B cell and the receptor on the surface of the T cell which mediates contact-dependent
15 helper effector function is gp39. Preferably, the antagonist is an anti-gp39 antibody or a soluble gp39 ligand (e.g., soluble CD40). The methods of the invention can be used to induce T cell tolerance to a soluble antigen or to an allogeneic cell. The methods of the invention can also be used to induce tolerance in cases of bone marrow transplantation and other organ transplants and to inhibit graft-versus-host disease.

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